



NEWS RELEASE

State Senator Gary Nodler
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SENATE BILL 942 GIVEN FINAL APPROVAL BY LEGISLATURE, CITIES OF NEOSHO, PIERCE CITY AND SALEM GRANTED OWNERSHIP OF ARMORIES

JEFFERSON CITY -- The Missouri General Assembly today gave final approval to Senate Bill 942, sponsored by Sen. Gary Nodler, R-Joplin, aimed at preserving National Guard armories in Neosho, Pierce City and Salem by transferring ownership to the city governments.

As a cost-saving measure, in October of 2003 the National Guard announced plans to close the three armories.

“Each of these armories is important to their towns and each will get a whole new life under city ownership,” said Nodler.

The City of Neosho is planning to convert structure into a new police station with one floor dedicated to the city’s municipal courtroom.

One year ago this month, tornadoes ripped through Southwest Missouri leaving destruction in its wake. Pierce City was among the most seriously impacted, losing more than 80 homes and all but three of its downtown businesses. The armory, built in 1941, received \$825,000 in damage, destroying the roof and killing one person who had taken shelter inside.

The Pierce City Council has been negotiating with the Carter Community Mental Health Center Inc. to move its headquarters to town. The city would lease the armory to the Carter Center for use as its new headquarters.

“After a year of endless bad news, this is finally a positive development for Pierce City,” Nodler said. “By relocating its headquarters, Carter Community Mental Health will bring approximately 70 new jobs to town.”

The Salem National Guard Armory is being converted for use by a cardio-vascular wellness program for residents of Dent County.

Having been approved by the legislature, SB 942 will be sent to the governor to be signed into law.